Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) An information-processing method including:

      receiving a message;

      ascertaining whether the message is in a selected application format;

      if the message is not in the selected application format:

            routing the message to a next location; and

      if the message is in the selected format:

            routing the message to a selected application processor;

            processing the message by the selected application processor; and

      routing the message to the next location.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein receiving the message includes receiving a packet.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, wherein receiving the packet includes receiving the packet from a network.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 3, wherein receiving the packet from a network includes receiving the packet from a packet switched network.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 4, wherein the network is the Internet.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein

      ascertaining whether the message is in a selected application format includes ascertaining whether the message is encrypted; and

      processing the message by the selected application processor includes decrypting the message by the selected application processor.

7. (Previously Presented) An information-processing system comprising:

      a fabric configured for communication with a network;

a plurality of application services devices;

wherein the plurality of application service devices are configured to receive a plurality of unprocessed application-specific messages from the fabric;

wherein each unprocessed application-specific message is configured to be processed by a particular application; wherein the fabric is adapted to route each of the plurality of unprocessed application-specific messages to an application service device adapted to process the message with the particular application;

wherein the plurality of application service devices are further configured to process the unprocessed application-specific messages in parallel, wherein each unprocessed application-specific message is processed with the particular application for which it is configured, whereby a plurality of processed application-specific messages is produced; and

wherein the plurality of application service devices are further configured to send the each processed application-specific message to the fabric.

8. (Previously Presented) The information-processing system of Claim 7, wherein each message comprises a packet.

9. (Previously Presented) The information-processing system of Claim 8, wherein each application service device comprises a hardware state machine.

10. (Previously Presented) The information-processing system of Claim 9, wherein the plurality of application service devices are included in a single integrated circuit.

11. (Previously Presented) The information-processing system of Claim 7, wherein each application service device comprises a simple programmable processor.

12. (Previously Presented) The information-processing system of Claim 7, wherein at least one of the plurality of application service devices comprises a plurality of interoperably configured distinct physical devices.

3

13. (Previously Presented) The information-processing system of Claim 7, wherein at least one of the plurality of application service devices comprises an SSL/TLS processor.

14. (Previously Presented) The information-processing system of Claim 7, wherein the plurality of unprocessed application-specific messages comprises an unprocessed application stream, and wherein the plurality of processed application-specific messages comprises a processed application stream.

15. (Previously Presented) The information-processing system of Claim 14, wherein the application streams comprise an SSL/TLS connection between a web browser and a web server.

16. (Previously Presented) The information-processing system of Claim 14, wherein the application streams comprise an e-mail transfer.

17. (Previously Presented) The information-processing system of Claim 14, wherein the application streams comprise a virtual private networking communication.

18. (Previously Presented) The information-processing system of Claim 14, wherein the application streams comprise a TCP offload engine communication.

19. (Previously Presented) An information-processing method, including:

receiving a message;

after receiving the message: ascertaining whether the message is susceptible to be processed by a particular application;

if the message is susceptible to be processed by the particular application:

routing the message to an application service device that is adapted to use the particular application to process the message;

after routing the message to the application service device: processing the message by the application service device using the particular application;

after processing the message: routing the message to a next location; and if the message is not an application-specific message: routing the message to the next location.

20. (Previously Presented) The information-processing method of Claim 19, wherein the particular application comprises a decryption application, and wherein a message susceptible to by processed by the particular application comprises an encrypted message.

21. (Previously Presented) The information-processing method of Claim 20, wherein the message is a packet.

22. (Previously Presented) An information-processing method, including:

a first iteration of the method of Claim 19;

a second iteration of the method of Claim 19;

wherein the receiving a message of the second iteration corresponds to the routing of the message to the next location of the first iteration, whereby the message is processed in a pipeline fashion.

23. (New) A method for processing information, comprising:

receiving a packet in a packet filter from a switched network;

ascertaining whether the packet is in sequence or out of sequence;

if the packet is out of sequence:

routing the packet to a packet sequencer, and

routing the packet from the packet sequencer to a selected application processor;

and

if the packet is in sequence:

routing the packet to a selected application processor;

processing the packet by the selected application processor; and

routing the packet to the next location;

wherein processing the packet by the selected application processor includes decrypting the packet.

24. (New)   The method of claim 1, wherein the selected application format relates to the encryption status of the message, wherein the message is in the application format if it is encrypted, and wherein the message is not in the application format if it is not encrypted.

25. (New)   The method of claim 1, wherein the selected application format relates to the encryption status of the message, wherein the message is in the application format if it is not encrypted, and wherein the message is not in the application format if it is encrypted.